

of our Constitution, and their experience is a powerful reminder to us of the importance of protecting the Constitution if we are to preserve freedom for ourselves and for the generations of Americans to follow. We can also learn much from their deep desire for American citizenship and their enthusiasm to embrace not only its privileges, but also its responsibilities—knowledge of and respect for our laws, a willingness to exercise their vote, and reverence for the fundamental American values of freedom, tolerance, and equality.

But today American citizenship requires more. At the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia this past April, I joined with Vice President Gore; former Presidents Ford, Carter, and Bush; General Colin Powell; and other national and community leaders in calling for a redefinition of American citizenship—a definition that includes a profound commitment to community service. Each of us must look into our own neighborhoods and communities and reach out to help our fellow Americans succeed. We can only fulfill America's bright promise of freedom and opportunity by ensuring that every citizen shares in that promise.

In commemorating the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the importance of active, responsible citizenship to preserve its blessings for our Nation, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 159), requested the President to proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1997, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1997, as Constitution Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, educational, and religious organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and programs in our schools, churches, and other community centers to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the Constitution and the rights and duties of citizenship.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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Proclamation 7023—National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 1997

September 16, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout our Nation's history, the men and women of America's Armed Forces have preserved our freedom, protected our security, and upheld our democratic values. From the battles of the American Revolution through the crucible of two world wars to the challenging peacekeeping and humanitarian missions of today's post-Cold War era, our men and women in uniform have stood proudly in defense of the United States and in the cause of liberty. In the two centuries since our Nation's birth, more than a million have paid the price of that liberty with their lives.

Joining the ranks of these heroes are the thousands who have been held as prisoners of war or whose fate has never been resolved. Many have been lost in the chaos of battle, the grief of their loss made more acute for their families and their fellow Americans because of the inability to determine whether they perished or survived. Captive Americans, cruelly stripped of their freedom, treated with contempt and brutality, or used as pawns by their captors in a larger political struggle, have fought long, lonely battles against despair, physical and psychological torture, and the ultimate fear of being forgotten.

But Americans will never forget those who have borne the indignities and sufferings of

captivity in service to our country, those missing in action, or those who died as prisoners of war, far from home and family. On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, we reaffirm our commitment to those still missing and renew our pledge to make every effort to obtain the answers to their fate. We can do no less for these American heroes and for their families, who have endured such profound loss and whose suffering continues as long as their loved ones' fate remains unknown.

On September 19, 1997, the flag of the National League of Families of American Prisoners of War and Missing in Southeast Asia will be flown over the White House, the U.S. Capitol, the Departments of State, Defense, and Veterans Affairs, the Selective Service System Headquarters, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and national cemeteries across our country. This black and white banner, symbolizing America's missing, is a stark and powerful reminder to people around the world that our Nation will keep faith with those who have served and sacrificed; that we will not rest until we receive the fullest possible accounting of every American missing in service to our country.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 19, 1997, as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I ask all Americans to join me in honoring former American prisoners of war and those whose fate is still undetermined. I also encourage the American people to remember with special sympathy and concern the courageous families who maintain their steadfast vigil and who persevere in their search for answers and for the peace that comes only with certainty. Finally, I call upon State and local officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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Remarks to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus

September 16, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you for the wonderful welcome you have given to the Vice President and me. Thank you, Xavier. Thank you, Carmen, Carolina. To the Members of Congress who are here, members of the Hispanic Caucus Institute, members of our administration—all those who were introduced by the Vice President. I'd also like to acknowledge the presence here of the general chairman of our political party, the Democratic Party, Governor Roy Romer of Colorado. Welcome, Governor Romer.

Xavier pointed out that I have been here all 5 years I have been President. I come because I have a good time. [Laughter] I like it. I know that here I will see the future of America, the vitality, the energy, the commitment, the passion necessary to make this country what it ought to be. But I have been here five times. [Laughter] I mean, those of us who are linguistically challenged—[laughter]—always learn a few phrases—you know, *su voto es sus votos; mi casa es su casa*. [Laughter] Now I can say, *su caucus es mi caucus*.

I come here because when I leave here, I feel more alive, I feel more committed, I feel new energy, and I like what I see. I thank the Members of Congress for their service. I thank the Hispanics who have served in our administration more than in any other in the past; the members of the Cabinet who are here—Secretary Peña, Ambassador Richardson, Aida Alvarez. To all those in the White House—Maria Echaveste, Mickey Ibarra, Janet Murguia, and others. To my speechwriter, Carolyn Curiel, who I will soon nominate to be Ambassador to Belize. Gloria Tristani, whom I have just selected to serve as the newest member of the Federal Communications Commission.

There is also another person here I want to acknowledge who will have a lot to do with